



How Can We Interpret Revelation 10 and John's Scroll-Eating Experience?

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As we delve into the profound symbolism and rich imagery of [Revelation chapter 10](#), we embark on a journey of spiritual discovery. This chapter, nestled within John's apocalyptic vision, offers us a unique perspective on God's plan for the end times. Let us approach this study with humility and reverence, seeking to understand the divine message conveyed through these verses.

Verse 1: *"Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire."* ([Revelation 10:1](#)). This verse introduces us to a majestic angelic figure, described in terms reminiscent of God's own glory. The cloud symbolizes divine presence, as seen in the Old Testament ([Exodus 13:21](#)). The rainbow recalls God's covenant with Noah ([Genesis 9:13](#)), suggesting this angel brings a message of both judgment and mercy. The sun-like face and fiery legs further emphasize the angel's celestial nature and divine authority.

Verse 2: *"He held a little scroll open in his hand. He put his right foot on the sea and his left on the land,"* ([Revelation 10:2](#)). The little scroll likely contains God's decrees for the world. The angel's stance, with one foot on the sea and one on land, symbolizes God's sovereignty over all creation. This posture also suggests that the message in the scroll is of global significance, affecting both land (Israel) and sea (gentil nations).

Verses 3-4:*"and he called out with a loud voice like a roaring lion. When he cried out, the seven thunders spoke with their voices. And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, 'Seal up what the seven thunders said, and do not write it down!'"*([Revelation 10:3-4](#)). The angel's lion-like voice underscores the power and authority of his proclamation, echoing God's voice described in [Amos 1:2](#): *"The Lord roars from Zion and makes his voice heard from Jerusalem."* The seven thunders—possibly representing the complete voice of God—respond, mirroring the *"thunderings and voices"* mentioned in [Revelation 4:5](#). Intriguingly, John is forbidden from recording their message, reminiscent of Paul's experience in [2 Corinthians 12:4](#) where he *"heard inexpressible words, which a human being is not allowed to speak."* This reminds us that while God reveals much, some aspects of His plan remain hidden until His appointed time ([Ecclesiastes 3:11](#)), teaching us to trust His wisdom even when we don't fully understand. As [Deuteronomy 29:29](#) emphasizes, *"The hidden things belong to the Lord our God, but the revealed things belong to us and our children forever."*

Verse 5-7: *"Then the angel that I had seen standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven. He swore by the one who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it: "There will no longer be a delay, but in the days when the seventh angel will blow his trumpet, then the mystery of God will be completed, as he announced to his servants the prophets.""* ([Revelation 10:5-7, CSB](#)). The angel's oath, sworn by the eternal Creator, adds solemnity to his declaration. The announcement that *"there will no longer be a delay"* suggests that God's final plans are about to unfold. The reference to the *"mystery of God"* being completed alludes to the culmination of God's redemptive work, as foretold by the prophets. This reminds us that God's plans, while sometimes seeming slow to human perception, are always right on schedule according to His divine timeline.

Verse 8-11: *"Then the voice that I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, "Go, take the scroll that lies open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, "Take and eat it; it will be bitter in your stomach, but it will be sweet as honey in your mouth." Then I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. It was as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I ate it, my stomach became bitter. And they said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages, and kings.""* ([Revelation 10:8-11](#)). The act of eating the scroll symbolizes internalizing God's message, echoing Ezekiel's similar experience ([Ezekiel 2–3](#)). The contrasting tastes – sweet in the mouth but bitter in the stomach – represent the dual nature of God's word: sweet in revealing truth and promises, bitter in conveying judgment and human sinfulness. This duality reflects the nature of the little book, likely containing God's final judgments against the nations. By ingesting the scroll, John symbolically internalizes these judgments, preparing him for his prophetic task of proclaiming both God's promises and judgments. This act sets in motion the fulfillment of God's mysteries as revealed to His prophets ([Revelation 10:7](#)). Furthermore, John's commission to prophesy again emphasizes the ongoing nature of God's revelatory work. It also highlights the global scope of the message, encompassing all peoples and nations.

In conclusion, Revelation 10 serves as a powerful reminder of God's sovereignty over history and His commitment to revealing His plans to His servants. It encourages us to approach God's word with reverence, understanding that while it brings comfort, it may also challenge us. As we study prophecy, let us remember that our ultimate goal is not just to understand future events, but to draw closer to the God who holds all time in His hands. May this study inspire us to live with greater faith and urgency, knowing that God's plans are unfolding and that we are called to be His witnesses in these times. Let us approach the mysteries of Revelation with humility, always seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our understanding and application of these profound truths.

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